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THE

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION MAGAZINE.

No. CXCI. NOVEMBER, 1864. Vol. XVI.

"The word of the Lord endureth for ever."—1 Peter i. 25.

PROFITS DEVOTED TO RAGGED SCHOOLS.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.—The Committee beg to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of two parcels of clothing from Mrs. Reade; a parcel of clothing from Joseph Payne, Esq., for George Yard School; a parcel of clothing from the Highgate Ladies' Working Party for Lamb and Flag Schools; a bale of flannel from Mrs. Symons; a parcel of jackets, &c., from Mrs. Carpmael; a coat, trousers, and waistcoat from an anonymous friend; a parcel of shirts, &c., from Mrs. Riddell, and a bag of waste envelopes from Mrs. Mendham.

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Papers, Original and Selected.

THE CHIMNEY SWEEPERS' EMANCIPATION DAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1864.

IN our number for last July we furnished a report of a speech delivered by Lord Shaftesbury in the House of Lords, on the occasion of moving the second reading of his Bill for the Regulation of Chimney Sweepers. The House was convinced of the soundness of his Lordship's arguments, considered his facts incontrovertible, and proceeded to discuss the proposed measure, with an honest desire to arrive at the best and most effective legislation by which the further employment of children as chimney sweepers should be prevented.

The evils complained of have been known to only a few of the many requiring the services of the chimney sweeper, and far too large a proportion of that "many" were willing to continue their ignorance, perhaps on the footing of the old adage, that "where ignorance was bliss 'twas folly to be wise." To them it would have been far from bliss to be informed of the suffering of boys, who, having become immovably fixed in awkwardly constructed chimneys, had to be cut out in order to be relieved; of others, who, having fallen with the chimney-pots, have been dashed to death on the flags below; to say nothing of those who have been suffocated, or those burnt to death in chimneys, and of those dying a lingering, torturing death from the sweep's cancer.

The cruelty of the employment is such, that it would seem that no one could desire the continuance of it, but it has been kept up because people do not think about it. It is a work of darkness, which has gone on in their own houses while they are unconscious. The child was put up the chimney while they were in bed and asleep, and as the fire burns brightly when they come down to breakfast, it is pretty clear the poor little creature is not only down again, but is wholly off the premises. The comfort to the house is thus gained it may be at the cost of a shilling; but what was the cost to the child that did the work? In a Blue Book of Evidence

before a Committee of the House of Commons are these particulars :—

"What sum of money is generally given for those children to the parents by the master chimney sweeper?

"Two or three pounds; it depends on circumstances; sometimes more, sometimes less.

"Do you give more for children delicately formed, and who are therefore better calculated for small chimneys?

"The smaller they are, the masters generally like them the better, because they are generally more serviceable to them.

"So that a small boy bears a better price than a full-grown boy?

"Yes.

"In general do children so employed go unwillingly to work?

"Yes; they always go unwillingly to their work.

"Have you not often heard of masters treating their boys, especially the little boys, with cruelty, in forcing them up small flues?

"Yes; I have forced many a one myself.

"What methods do they use to make them go up?

"Make them strip naked, and threaten to beat them. I have been obliged to go up a chimney naked, but I do not like to see my children do so.

"Is your boy small of his age?

"Yes.

"Do you employ him to ascend small flues?

"Yes; because I have only got him. I am obliged to get my living *by him*, or else I must go without.

"Has he ever been injured?

"Yes; but never by sweeping chimneys.

"What was the matter with him?

"The doctor said it was an inward complaint.

"What are the smallest flues up which boys are sent?

"Seven inches square.

"How long is a boy sometimes in a flue?

"I went in at eight, and came out at two."

Soot must be removed or the chimney will be choked, comfort annihilated, and property endangered, but surely not at so fearful a cost as above indicated. "The removal of soot," the *Times* last June said in its leading article, "can only be done—we fear to say in how large a proportion of cases—by forcing poor urchins, barely out of their babyhood, up the long, narrow, winding passage, where they can only move up and down by pressing every joint in their little bodies against the hard and often broken surface of the chimney. Nature has made man a climbing animal, and enabled him to grasp the stem of the tree with his limbs, to plant his toes on the least irregularity of the bark, and to grasp the branch with his fingers. It is the soft and muscular palm of the hand and the inside of the finger, the soft ball of the toe, the soft front of the

whole frame, that bears the brunt of this operation; and the climber descends from the forest tree or the rocky precipice without having one angular joint or unprotected bone exposed to hard contact or undue pressure. The chimney sweep, on the contrary, works against the order of nature. He is said to climb, but what he does is the very converse of ordinary climbing. He is that 'angular' man that humorists talk of, always giving and receiving wounds. Thus, against the order of physical nature, but in too regular fulfilment of the great law of suffering, he clears away the grimy products of the Englishman's fireside, and enables us to put our feet on the fender, to poke the fire, and enjoy its warmth without expecting downfalls of soot, or, perhaps, an outbreak of flames. Such is the victim of comfort and the scapegoat of civilization that Lord Shaftesbury took in hand, and introduced to the Lords, not now for the first, or even for the second or third time, last sessions. No client of humanity can establish a stronger claim to protection. We have made him what he is. Our fireside and our kitchen are answerable for his misery and degradation. We have taken him from all sorts of healthy influences, and converted him at once into a horrible and disgusting object. Lord Shaftesbury reveals the hideous mysteries of the training and schooling. The child, the earlier the better for the purpose, must have brine rubbed into his knees to endure the scarifying process. He is lacerated at every joint; every pore of his skin is choked with solid dirt; he becomes liable to a special curse in the form of a dangerous cancer; he breathes soot, he is stifled by hot sulphurous air, and in 'the middle passage,' as it were, he often faints, and there remains till he is dug out or dragged out, if the once usual quickener of lighted straw is found inoperative. His future destiny, if any, is to be himself a master sweep, and to sit down some day and smoke his pipe, while he makes others do the work. According to the figures quoted by Lord Shaftesbury, he is scarcely found ever able to read, though that is his only escape from the black hole into which an evil fate has cast him. He grows up incapable of any other employment."

These are points of the subject "the many" care not to inquire into very minutely, but, on the other hand, "the few" have not only known the existence of these evils, but have done what they could at once to mitigate them, by inventing some practical scheme for doing the same work with equal, if not with greater, success, and which would not involve human misery and imperil human life. Others have employed the press for the purpose of bringing public

opinion to bear on the question, and then by means of petitions to both Houses of Parliament, to get the strong arm of the law uplifted in defence of the poor, destitute, friendless, down-trodden, and cruelly used climbing-boy.

Mr. Joseph Glass, of Moor Lane, London, with whom it was our pleasure to be identified in some of his benevolent and Christian efforts, stands foremost among those "few," and by whose ingenuity a machine was invented by which 1,999 chimneys out of every 2,000 could be swept, and by a small outlay of a few pounds, and in many cases only a few shillings, the *one* chimney in 2,000 could be altered sufficiently to admit the machine. As it is with almost all improvements, the introduction of the machine was looked upon by the trade as an innovation, and it was most vigorously opposed. But in 1840, the Act for the regulation of chimney sweepers and chimneys was passed, by which it was made unlawful after July, 1842, for children to climb chimneys, or for any child under sixteen years of age to be apprenticed to a chimney sweeper. This was considered not only a great success, but all that was required, and so satisfied were the friends of the cause, that they considered their work done, the evil ended, and the balance of £392 3s. 2d. left after paying all expenses, might be returned to the contributors in proportion to the amount of their original donation. But, what is the fact; on June 4, 1864, after twenty-four years' working of that Act, Lord Shaftesbury brought forward and moved the second reading of his Bill, and which, before that month closed, he succeeded in getting passed the Legislature. It is now known as "An Act to amend and extend an Act for the Regulation of Chimney Sweepers." In his speech on that occasion, he said:—"In 1862, a commission was appointed to inquire into the various trades in which children were engaged. The commission took evidence on the state of climbing-boys, confirming everything that had gone before, only that the evils were greater in amount and intensity than existed in former times. It is the evidence that was then adduced that I am now about to bring before your Lordships, in order to show the absolute necessity of the provisions I propose; and let me say that, revolting and disgusting as the evidence in the Report is, the facts stated in the Appendix are ten times more so. As to the age at which these children are generally forced into this work, the concurrent testimony of all is that the usual age is from six to eight. There are many instances of five, and even four years and a-half. The hours of working in the smaller towns are eight and nine, in

the larger towns twelve to sixteen; and for the greater part the work begins at four, three, and even two o'clock in the morning. This shows the cruelty of the system as affecting children of such tender years and such delicate frames engaged in this disgusting and revolting employment."

The Act for putting an end to these abominations comes into operation on this day, "The first day of November one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four." As the Act is very short, and of great importance to many a poor destitute child attending in Ragged Schools, we help to make it known by giving it insertion in our pages, and sincerely hope it will be the means of putting an end to that infant misery which was as cruel as it was unnecessary. It is a great consolation to travel at the rate of forty miles an hour, knowing the horse will not drop dead at the end of the journey; and it will be equally gratifying to sit by a bright fire, knowing it has not been obtained at the expense of innocent blood and cruel torture.

THE CHIMNEY SWEEPERS REGULATION ACT.

"Whereas by the Act of the Session of the Third and Fourth Years of Her Majesty Queen *Victoria* (Chapter Eighty-five), 'for the regulation of Chimney Sweepers and Chimneys,' Provision was made to prevent any Person compelling or knowingly allowing a Child or young Person under the Age of Twenty-one Years to ascend or descend a Chimney or enter a Flue for the Purpose of sweeping, cleaning, or coring the same, or for extinguishing Fire therein:

"And whereas it is expedient to amend in some Particulars and to extend the said Act (hereafter in this Act called the Principal Act):

"Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, as follows:

"*General.*

"1. This Act may be cited as 'The Chimney Sweepers Regulation Act, 1864;' the Principal Act may be cited as 'The Chimney Sweepers and Chimneys Regulation Act, 1840;' and the Principal Act and this Act may be cited together as 'The Chimney Sweepers and Chimneys Regulation Acts, 1840 and 1864.'

"2. This Act shall commence and take effect on the First Day of *November* One thousand eight hundred and sixty-four.

"3. In this Act—

The Term 'Sheriff' includes Stewart:

The Term 'Chimney Sweeper' means a Person using the Trade or Business of a Chimney Sweeper.

"4. This Act shall be construed together with the Principal Act as One Act, and for this Purpose the Expression 'this Act' when used in the Principal Act shall be taken to include the present Act.

"5. Any pecuniary Penalty recovered under this Act shall be applied as directed in the Principal Act.

"*Protection of Children and young Persons.*

"6. It shall not be lawful for a Chimney Sweeper to employ a Child under the Age of Ten Years to do or assist in doing any Work or Thing in or about the Trade or Business of such Chimney Sweeper elsewhere than within the House or Place of Business of such Chimney Sweeper, or the Yard or Building (if any) connected therewith.

"7. It shall not be lawful for a Chimney Sweeper, on any Occasion of his entering a House or Building for the Purpose of sweeping, cleaning, or coring a Chimney or Flue therein or belonging thereto, or for extinguishing Fire in any such Chimney or Flue, to cause or knowingly allow a Person under the Age of Sixteen Years in his Employment or under his Control to enter before, with, or after him into any Part of such House or Building, or to be therein for any Part of the Time during which such Chimney Sweeper himself continues therein for any such Purpose as aforesaid.

"8. If any Chimney Sweeper acts in contravention of either of the foregoing Enactments, he shall for every such Offence be liable to a Penalty not exceeding Ten Pounds.

"9. Where under Section Two of the Principal Act a Chimney Sweeper is convicted of the Offence of compelling or knowingly allowing a Person under the Age of Twenty-one Years to ascend or descend a Chimney or enter a Flue for any Purpose in that Section mentioned, the Justices or Sheriff before whom he is convicted may, in lieu of the Imposition of any such pecuniary Penalty as is authorized by that Section, adjudge the Offender to be imprisoned in the Common Gaol or House of Correction for any Term not exceeding Six Months, with or without Hard Labour.

"10. In any Prosecution of a Chimney Sweeper for any Offence against the Principal Act or against this Act, where the Age of any young Person or Child comes in question, the proof of the Age of such young Person or Child shall lie on the Defendant.

"11. Section Two of the Principal Act shall be read as if the Words 'or less than Five Pounds' were omitted therefrom."

We may now say, in the language of an old Ragged School friend and supporter, to the poor little climbing-boy on this the first day of November one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four,—

Arise, poor Captive! hence, away,
To hail Emancipation's Day,
That now, with no delusive ray,
Dawns on thine infant brow!
Go forth and take thy rightful stand
Among the Free-born of the land,
And with their joys and blessings blend,
Unknown to thee till now!

But stay!—Ere yet the threshold past,
Remember by *what Arm* thou hast,
Amid affliction's cruel blast,
Been shielded, hour by hour!
The *Same* that set *His Prisoner* free
In days of old, now bursts for thee
The *Chains* of thy *Captivity*,
And ope's thy *Prison Door!*

Then low upon thy knees descend,
To bless thy *Heavenly Guide* and *Friend*,
Whose *tender Mercy* knows no end,
GOD of the "Rich and Poor!"

Ere from thy *tattered garb* thou part,
O give to *Him* entire thy *heart*,
Nor from *His Saving Ways* depart,
Who giveth Life E'ermore!

THE CHILDREN'S FORTNIGHTLY DINNER.

DINNER is a very common meal; but, unfortunately, it is not so common as could be desired. The wan face, the thin limbs, and the spare body, so frequently to be met with in our Ragged Schools, are all indications of the want of a dinner. During babyhood most infants are round-faced and plump-bodied; but when the dependence on the mother ceases, the child's appearance often alters, and seldom for the better. This deterioration may partly arise from the want of pure air, but it is mostly attributable to the want of nourishing food. Victor Hugo's benevolent eye detected this deterioration in some of the residents around his own home in Jersey, where this change for the worse was less likely to arise from the want of pure air than in the low neighbourhoods of London. His keen eye impressed his benevolent mind, and he rested not till something was done to improve the *physique* of his neighbours; and he justly concluded that to accomplish that, the stamina must be improved, and the only way to bring about this, was by supplying an additional amount of nourishing food. Now came the practical difficulty—not the getting of the quality or the quantity of the food needed, but *the paying for it*. To undertake the entire support was soon considered to be not at all needful, it was only something *additional* that was required, and which should be given at fixed intervals. To give a good dinner once a month to a child did not seem wholly beyond Victor Hugo's power, and he began to try the experiment of a good monthly dinner to some of the most phthisical-looking of his neighbours. It might seem to the sceptical that this dinner was too much like what is said of angels' visits to be of any real benefit; but the result was such as to attract the attention of French physicians, for it was found that, while a good monthly dinner did not greatly add to the weight of the body, yet it was found that those who had it were better able to resist disease; and where disease had taken hold, the patient was far better able to throw it off, and that too with less of medical assistance.

The plan of giving a monthly dinner to a portion of the poor of Paris, by physicians and the benevolent friends associated with them, has been followed with similar good results, and in its turn has called the attention of the friends of the poor in London to the subject. A benevolent Israelitish lady in London has had her attention drawn to the subject, and for several months past has, at her sole expense, given to fifty scholars in one of the Ragged Schools in Westminster a fortnightly dinner. The plan adopted in this case is, to select fifty of the most weakly and delicate children in the school, and give to twenty-five of that number a good dinner every alternate Friday, at half-past twelve o'clock. On the occasion of our visit, the dinner consisted of a well-cooked Irish stew, and each child was allowed to eat as much as he

wished. The plan is carried out by the teacher of the school, under the direction of a surgeon, who is present at least at two out of every three dinners, and who on the occasion of our visit was not only present, but helped in serving out the dinner to the children. His opinion of the physical benefits resulting from this dinner is highly favourable. The teacher of the school kindly undertakes, with the assistance of her elder girls, the preparing, cooking, and serving up of the dinner; and she, in a note just received, says:—

"That the working of the 'Dinner Plan' at our school is beneficial to the bodies of the children, any one who has had the opportunity of seeing their improved appearance will readily admit. I consider it has great influence upon their behaviour, inasmuch as they are deprived of the privilege for bad conduct or irregular attendance; thus giving greater power to the teacher, and ensuring better attendance—so difficult to obtain among this class of children. Another advantage is, that they learn to eat their food properly. 'This,' said a lady, the other day, 'is a great advantage. I expected to see them pulling their food to pieces, but I see they know how to use a knife and fork.' I need scarcely say few did know how to use these articles when they first came to dinner. The advantages gained by the monitors are more than these, as they also learn marketing, cooking, cleaning and keeping in order all things that are used, and laying the cloth, and clearing all away; which I think will be of great use to them when they go to service. Most of them, I think, could cook the dinner now themselves. I think, too, the parents value it, for generally when any of the children are forbidden to come, they come to know the reason—occasionally we get abuse, and are threatened with the removal of the children. The reason is explained, and if that does not satisfy, they have to be told it will be rather an advantage for them to stay away, as there are plenty more anxious to take their places. I think the threat has only been carried out once. On the other hand, some of the parents have expressed their gratitude, and owned that their children must have gone without had it not been for this.

"I might say more, but I think you will see from these statements how much benefit is derived from the plan, and I am very grateful to the friends who have so liberally supplied it."

This school is situated in New Tothill Street, Westminster; and should any friends be inclined to try a similar plan in any other of the 200 Ragged Schools in London, and should wish for further information, they would find the friends at that school most ready and willing to give an account of what they do, and show, if wished, on any Friday, how they do it.

It is gratifying to find that the plan has been commenced in two other schools: one in Kentish Town, where seven boys one week, and eight girls the other, have a good dinner of roast meat and vegetables given them by a benevolent gentleman of that locality. The other is in Clare Market, where about forty weak children are selected, not so much from the Ragged School there, as from the neighbourhood in general. There the dinner day is Wednesday, about 12.30. Half the number take the dinner in alternate weeks. The dinners are mostly of roast mutton with vegetables. The expenses there are defrayed from general contributions.

We hope soon to find the plan more generally adopted, for the results, as at present known, fully justify its extension to every poor neighbourhood, not only in London, but in every city and town throughout the kingdom.

THE LOST WAIF FOUND; OR, ALONE IN THE LIGHTHOUSE.

A LONG, narrow point of land, whose shores were washed by the waves of the Atlantic, stretched for some distance out into the sea. For miles on either side the beach was smooth and sandy, with scarcely a curve or an angle to break the straight line which divided the land from the water; and had it not been for the light which burned so brightly and faithfully from out the lighthouse on the point, many a noble vessel would have gone to pieces on its treacherous shoals. This little strip of land had always been called "The Neck," and except the tall lighthouse, painted in the strongest white and black, with the tiny stone cottage attached, and two or three fishermen's huts, there was no habitation for many miles around.

Two old people—a white-haired man and his wife—had for years been the tenants of the little cottage; and every night, as their faithful repeater rung out the hours, they each took their turn in mounting the stone steps and the steep iron ladder of the tower, to trim the lamp and keep its light from going out. Besides this old couple, there dwelt in the cottage a child of some eight or nine years—too young to be a daughter of the light-keeper and his wife, and too unlike them in every way for even the relation to exist between them which her loving title of "Grandpa" and "Grandma" might have implied. It was generally known about there that six years before a ship had gone to pieces on the coast, and of all those who floated ashore only this child was living; and she was clasped in the arms of a dead woman, whom the light-keeper buried beneath a clump of water willows, and only a lock of her long, fair hair was preserved, in case she should ever be inquired for. Indeed, there was nothing else to save, for there was no mark on her garments, though on the child's white dress a delicate vine was woven into the shape of the letter W. She was taken to the lighthouse, and because the inmates had no children of their own, and because she looked so bright and beautiful in their homely rooms, they adopted her as their own. For a long time they puzzled themselves over her name; the child could not tell it herself; and finally the old man said she should be called "Waif," because she had come into their possession, and there was no one to claim her. So the child was growing up in the lonely place, and bringing sunshine into the aged hearts, that somehow lightened and grew fresher for having a young thing like her to cheer them with her glad laughter.

There were many ways in which she helped the old people with her light and busy fingers; but when her tasks were over she loved best to wander along the sea-shore, where she would rove for hours, gathering the bright pebbles and the beautiful shells, until her little apron would overflow with her treasures. Then, in the afternoon, she would sit out in the sunshine with the fishermen's wives, helping them mend their husbands' nets, disentangling their fishing lines, listening to their wild stories of shipwrecks, and drinking in their superstitious fictions with attentive ears.

The light that shone out every evening from the tall tower was a wonderful thing to her, and ever after she came to understand the danger that it warded off, she looked at its warning rays with the greatest awe. It was a sacred

trust to her when she was first permitted to clean and trim the lamp; and although the night which followed was bright and cloudless, she lay awake until morning, fearing lest she had not attended to it properly, and that shipwrecks might ensue. But after a while she conquered this feeling, when she found that she was even more careful with it than the old people, and it was with a bounding step that she climbed the ladder, and with a glad heart that she saw that she could do everything with her own small hands. The keepers would never allow her to sit up at night, although she had often begged them to let her take her turn for an hour at least; but it so happened that, contrary to all her expectations, the whole responsibility of guarding the light once fell upon herself.

The light-keeper and his wife were one day obliged, unexpectedly, to go to a neighbouring town; and fearing lest a storm, which seemed to be gathering, should detain them until the next day, the old man sent for his brother to come and take his place. The brother sent back word that he would be at the Neck by five o'clock; and as he had never failed in keeping these appointments, the people went away from the cottage early, with no misgivings on their minds, leaving Waif in company with two fishermen's wives. As the hour of five approached gusts of wind and rain began to beat against the house; and the child, seeing that her companions were uneasy about their husbands, who were still out in the boats, bade them go to their homes, saying that in a quarter of an hour Uncle Rollin would surely be with her. She spread the table, put fresh wood on the fire, and every minute or two looked at the old time-piece to see how the hands moved on; but five and six o'clock came without any Uncle Rollin; and when the hour-hand at last pointed at seven, Waif's heart more than trembled with anxiety lest he should disappoint her. She had lighted the lamp, but every moment the storm was growing fiercer, and she opened the door, and tried to make her voice reach one of the huts, but the strong wind sent her back again; and after waiting another hour, she barred the doors, and went up into the lonely lighthouse to watch the lamp, if need be, until morning dawned.

She was naturally courageous, but when she found herself alone in that solitary place, with the wind whistling around her, and the waters surging madly below her, the terrible responsibility that rested upon her almost overcame her. The lighthouse seemed to be swaying to and fro, and the child could not help thinking of the wild stories that the fishermen's wives had told her, and of one in particular, where a lighthouse had been taken from its foundation and carried out to sea. Oh, it was dreadful! and the little hands shook as they poured fresh oil into the lamps and wiped the moisture from the glass, lest such a fate might be hers. She looked out from the window, but the sight appalled her; the bright light threw a broad glare on the water, but she could only see the white foam-caps leaping up below her, and hear the sea dashing against the stone walls of the tower; but as she stood on the little platform beside the great glass lens, fearing and trembling lest every moment the floods should carry her away, there came, as it were, a sweet voice into her ear, saying—

"In thy need call to the Lord,
Pray to him in faith and trust,
And gracious aid he will afford."

The words seemed strangely familiar, though she could not tell where she had heard them, and yielding to the impulse, she obeyed the voice, and asked God not to forsake her. All of a sudden there came a tremendous sea, which swept completely over the lighthouse, shattering the thick panes of glass, and pouring in a stream of water at her feet. She quailed and trembled, but only for a moment, for she felt that now or never she must be faithful to her lamp. What if the glass around that should be crushed also? And now the rain and the leaping spray came rushing in, but this time another sound came into her ears, and she trembled anew as she heard the boom of a gun, and knew it was a signal from some vessel in distress. She peered through the window, but could see nothing but the black night, and the dashing foam sent her back again. For weary hours she watched the lamp, never suffering its light to dim, while her form shivered with the cold, and her garments were drenched with the spray that still poured in.

At length, and oh how long the night had seemed, the grey morning dawned; the wind had subsided, and the rain came down more gently, when lifting up her tired head from the bench on which it had fallen, she caught a glimpse of a large ship riding at anchor not far from the shore, and with one grateful cry for a sight that rewarded her for that long night of watching, she sank exhausted to the floor.

A little later a boat was cutting through the waves. The captain of the ship determined to go ashore and tell the people in the lighthouse that his passengers were indebted to their faithful care of the light for their deliverance from shipwreck. At first he could gain no admission, for the door was barred, but the captain effected an entrance through the window, and still seeing no one, kept on up into the tower, where he found the little girl lying on the wet floor among the broken glass. She was fast asleep, but he lifted her up tenderly, and carrying her down-stairs to her little bed, he called to his companions to look at their preserver. Every heart was touched, and a strange and sudden yearning took possession of one of their number when he saw the fair-haired child, but when in her sleep she murmured the first line of the little verse, "In thy need call to the Lord," he caught her to his heart and wept over her. His companions wondered at his emotion, which he could only explain by telling them that his lost wife used to sing that verse long ago, when she rocked her infant to sleep with its lullaby. The old people soon returned, and they too wept over little Waif when they heard the story of her long night in the watch-tower. The stranger, who had grown deeply interested, asked if she was their grandchild, and the light-keeper finding so willing a listener, told him the history of the little girl, and ended in showing him the long fair tresses and the muslin dress. Every moment he drew nearer the child, but when he saw these last tokens, he cried, "She is mine, then, my own darling child, Winifred, whom I thought was lost!"

As soon as Winifred (now Waif no longer) awoke, and was told that her faith and courage had saved her own father, she was grateful beyond expression, and clung to her newly-found parent with eager caressing fondness, while tears of both joy and grief rolled down the cheeks of the aged pair, who had loved her so dearly. Her father soon took her away from that house by the sea, but he would not separate her from the old people, who had given

her a home and all its comforts for so many years. Together they crossed the broad ocean, and went to live in a beautiful home, where Winifred still remained the light of the old people, and the crowning joy of her father's heart.

THE HOMES OF THE WRETCHED; OR, THE EXPERIENCES OF CHRISTY, THE CITY MISSIONARY.

In a yard of the town, near the small habitations of some Manchester weavers, a few children were playing at marbles. Every now and then, one of the number, followed by the eyes of a younger child, turned aside from the game, to con over some Protestant rhymes, which he was eagerly trying to learn by heart. "What do you do so for?" said little Christy. "What have you got there?" "It is my task for the Sunday-school," said the other; and forthwith he kept on, buzzing something to himself. Christy asked to hear it. No; in vain he opened both his ears, nothing could he catch. But Christy's curiosity was more and more excited. At length, he thought of an expedient; he coaxed out of his mother a hard-got consent to let him go to the Sunday-school, and hear his playmate say his task.

There, perched upon a high form, sat Christy, his little feet dangling in the air, his hands in his pockets, eyes and ears wide open, to take in all the astonishing information which was being poured forth on all sides, in his presence. The earnest, thoughtful, and observant boy received with the deepest attention those solemn truths which so many a Sunday-school child hears, without learning, from boyhood to youth.

Each returning Sabbath saw little Christy often stealing from his parents to go to this Sunday-school. He heard the Bible read, he heard that it was God's own word, and to be read by all. He could not read it, but he clasped it to his heart with joy. He heard explained the holy truths of Christianity stripped of their Romish disguise; he heard of God the only Father; of Jesus Christ the only Redeemer; of the Holy Ghost, the strength and comfort of the faithful. Meanwhile, where was Christy gone? became the question at home; and his mother discovered, in great anger, the place of his Sunday resort. From this time poor Christy went but rarely to the Sunday-school.

But he kept in his heart the treasure he had acquired of the knowledge of Christ—small though it was. As he grew up from youth to manhood, more and more was he set upon following the Lord according to his conscience. At length the home disquiets reached such a height, that the door of his mother's house was closed upon him, and she would see him no more. He was turned out into the streets of the great town, to earn his living as he could.

Chisty had no trade, no means of getting a livelihood. A Christian man took pity upon him, and engaged to teach him the trade of a weaver. By help of this friend, Christy established himself in lodgings, a little way out of town. Here, on Sabbaths, and in the pauses of labour, he would resort to a green hill, which rose just behind the house, and flinging himself upon the

grass, pass many hours in paroxysms of mental distress. Then he would rise and go to the corner of some street, where his mother was likely to pass, that he might catch one glimpse of her. Well did he know, even in the distance, the small blue pattern of her gown; and there would he watch, until she had gone by, and he could see her no longer.

After a time Christy went away to seek a living. He soon obtained employment. His leisure time he occupied in endeavouring to improve his mind and add to his small stock of learning. As times grew better he prospered still more, till at last he began to think of returning to his native place, and setting up a little home of his own.

Let us now take a peep at them by their humble fireside. Christy has commenced business on his own account; he works at the loom, and his steady, pious wife Alice at the spinning jenny; their principal employment is making stockings, and their business is successful. A little Alice, too, is trotting about the floor.

Christy, however, is not quite satisfied; he is grateful and happy; but still he wishes for some more direct employment in his Master's business. His religious experience, and the knowledge he had acquired, enabled him now, to his great delight, to be a teacher in that very Sunday-school where he had once been a scholar. It happened that one of his children lived in a distant village, where there was no church, nor any religious instruction provided. Every Sabbath, therefore, Christy walked over to the place; he read the Bible to the people; he explained to them the way of salvation; he entreated them to think of their souls. Moved by his words, the people began to read and pray for themselves; and now, on a Sabbath morning, the roads that led from the secluded village might be seen traversed in various directions by numbers of persons, all willing to walk many long miles, that they might unite with God's people in public worship. Encouraged by this, Christy devoted more and more of his time to the same labours, until, at length, not only were his Sabbaths wholly given up to them, but often was he called from his loom to the sick and the dying.

As his business increased, he removed from one place to another, until the family finally settled in London. Wherever Christy went, he carried on his missionary labours; wherever we live, that place is, in fact, our missionary station, if we could but think it so—if we would but try to make it so. But some friends wished to see him wholly devoted to missionary work. They counselled him, therefore, to offer himself as a missionary to the London City Mission, and promised themselves to contribute half his salary. The offer was accepted, and those who knew his zeal and earnestness advised his being placed upon a district which few at that period would have ventured to visit.

Christy was conducted round to survey his district. He was terrified at the wickedness and misery he saw. "I knew," he said, "that —— Lane was a bad place, but my idea of the iniquity of the people was infinitely short of what I found it." In some places the houses were dilapidated and falling into decay; not the less, however, were they crowded almost to suffocation with inhabitants. Here there was no bedding, the floor was black with dirt, and the children, left to themselves, were crawling half-naked over it. There awful cases of fever prevailed, and small, without air, and perhaps without

water, was the prospect of the recovery of the sufferers. In the highway and open spaces the pavement was strewn with all sorts of old things for sale, from old clothes and old furniture to old rags and old nails; the back streets were filthy in the extreme; the courts were heaps of rubbish; the alleys were ankle-deep in mud; there was no sewerage, and but little water; heaps of matter, never removed, infected the air.

But this was not the worst. Sabbath-breaking, intoxication, thieving, and swearing, prevailed everywhere. The missionary saw people take off the very clothes they were wearing, and pledge them for drink; he saw others in all the agony of delirium tremens; he saw others without an article of furniture in their rooms, having pledged or sold all.

Our missionary's heart misgave him. He began to think that he was not fit for such work, that he could not continue it.

On the third day of his visiting, as he entered a court, a young person, standing at the door of a house, invited him in. As soon as he got into the house, the door was shut. There he witnessed a fearful scene. The inmates flew upon him. He had to struggle, and hard, too, for his life; at length he made his escape, and rushed out into the street. He resolved to renounce a missionary life—to finish, as he said, his missionary career, and to leave such visitation to those who could better brave such horrors than he could. For this purpose he hastened to the house of a friend; he knocked at the door; it was opened by a young person, the daughter of his friend, who was playing on the piano. "Oh! my dear Mr. Christy," she said, "come in, and I will play you a tune." So, without speaking another word, she returned to the piano, and he followed her and sat down in the parlour, full of painful emotion from the scenes he had witnessed. The young girl commenced an inspiriting song:—

> "Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea,
> Jehovah has triumphed, his people are free!"

Its influence was not long in making itself felt in the heart of the missionary. "What!" he said to himself, "if the Lord could conquer his foes in Egypt, cannot he conquer his enemies in —— Lane?" And before the song was ended he had prayed for grace that he might live and die a missionary, and have cause to rejoice in the conquests the Lord should gain by his Spirit and his grace.

Not only was the wickedness of the people on his district thus trying to him, but their poverty and misery made his heart ache. He could not go among them, feeling that he had bread to eat and they had none, without longing to share what he had with them. As he had but a small salary, and a large family of children, this often reduced him to great straits. "And yet," he says, "I could not help but give, though often we have had to pinch a few of the last days of the last week of the month"—*i.e.*, just before the day on which the missionaries receive their monthly salary.

On one occasion—it was on a Tuesday, and the pay-day was Saturday—when he was going out in the morning, his wife called to him, "As it is washing-day," she said, "you will perhaps bring me home something for supper." She did not know he had only twopence-halfpenny left, neither did he like to say so; he only made answer, "Very well."

His first visit was to a room where a family of children were crying for food; he could not but compassionate the poor helpless little creatures; he sent one for a pennyworth of potatoes, another for a half-pennyworth of sprats, another he dispatched for a few sticks to light the fire, and another to the dust-heap to collect a few cinders to make it with. Soon there was a cheerful blaze, and a goodly smell of cooking. But what was to become of Mrs. Christy's supper?

The missionary continued his visits. He was attracted to a filthy back-room by the cries of some children, whose mother, he knew, was out selling apples. They, too, were crying for food. In the corner of the room were a few potatoes. A fire was lighted, and sending one of the little fellows for a pennyworth of sprats, the missionary soon spread out a tempting repast on a chair without a back to it, and watched the little ones as they stood round eating it. Where was now Mrs. Christy's supper?

His daily round over, he went to the room where he held the evening meeting. It was late before it was concluded. When all were gone, and he was locking the door, he suddenly bethought himself of Alice's supper. He felt very much grieved. It was rather serious, as he had no money left to get food for the next day. At last, he thought he would borrow some money from a friend, the friend at whose house he was about to leave the key of the school-room. When he entered, however, his heart failed him; he laid down the key, and went away.

He had not gone above a hundred yards from the house, when his friend called after him, and said, "Here's a parcel for you." Our missionary turned back; it was a hamper.

"It must be a mistake," he said; "it cannot be for me."

"Read the direction," was the answer.

"Then it is a hoax," said the missionary.

Some one cut the string of the hamper, and on lifting up the lid, he found a cheese, 6 lbs. of sugar, 6 lbs. of rice, 6 lbs. of butter, half a pound of tea, half a pound of coffee, half a pound of mustard, quarter of a pound of pepper, 10 lbs. of pork, and a small slip of paper, in an unknown writing, saying, "Please accept the enclosed."

Here, then, was Mrs. Christy's supper, and provision abundant for the few remaining days.

But sad as the poverty and privation that he saw among the people were to him, their crimes were sadder still. A large proportion of them were thieves and vagrants, buyers and sellers of stolen goods. One Sabbath, a little child about eleven years old, was found crying in the streets. Her mother had turned her out of doors; and why? The missionary went to inquire, and found that the mother was a person who lived by stealing from the shops; that she had sent this little one to steal some wood, but the child had refused to go; whereupon, the mother had put her out into the streets, and shut the door against her. The poor little thing sobbed for admittance in vain. The missionary reasoned, scolded, coaxed, promised, threatened; it was useless!

"Take her to the station-house," said the hard-hearted mother, "I will give evidence against her, and she shall be transported."

"Take your child in," said the missionary.

"No," said the mother.
"For the sake of humanity."
"No."
"For Christ's sake."
"No."
"For your soul's sake."
"No."

The missionary took the child to his own home.

From this child he learnt, with a shudder, of the haunts of thieves upon his district. He visited them in holes where they paid a penny per night to sit on the floor—they were too thronged to lie down. He bade them come to his house, he could talk with them better there.

It happened once there were some of these miserable outcasts who were ill; the missionary did not know what to do with them No hospital would receive them. The lowest lodging-house even in —— Lane refused to let them in. His wife was up-stairs, confined to her bedroom. "What," thought he, "if I should have them in the kitchen; they will be well perhaps before Alice comes down?" Accordingly, the thieves took possession of the kitchen. He next emptied a room in his house, and gave it up to them. But the room was small; the house was in a close, low part of London, and a terrible disease, called vagrant fever, broke out among them. It soon spread to the family of the missionary; seven, one after another, were laid upon a bed of sickness, and one died. "Save your halfpence," said the missionary to his children, "that we may be able to move into a larger house." They did so, and in the course of time the halfpence amounted to £15. This £15 they spent in purchasing a business, out of which, as the years went by, they saved a considerable sum; this was devoted to building a place for the reception of those unhappy beings.

It began to be known in London that those who wished to forsake a vagrant and dishonest life would find a friend in our missionary; and the neighbours were scared and angered by the number of thieves who congregated round his door, and in the lane leading to his dwelling. Hundreds by his help alone retraced their steps on the path of crime; some he got into an asylum, for some he obtained the means of emigrating, for some he obtained employment, a great many he received in turn into his own house. He was the means of saving 744 persons from a life of wretchedness. Again the fever broke out among them, and another of his own children died. He felt himself, however, called to the labour in the name of the Lord, and he did not desist.

If there was suffering for Christ's sake in that humble dwelling, there was also rejoicing. "I invariably show them," said the missionary, "that sin is the transgression of the law of God; and that none but Jesus Christ can save them. I do feel it to be a privilege which I desire never to lose sight of, the conversion of the soul, to save a soul from death. I say to myself, He who, in the agony of death, listened to the prayer of the dying thief, and so graciously answered it, can do the same for thee, poor thief; to him I look for the blessing; to him I desire to lead every poor thief that comes to me. I have been much blessed in my own soul in the work. It is a

labour over which I can pray; I feel it to be my duty. It is for me to labour, it is for God to bless."

The Lord added to his servant another blessing—the mother, whom he had loved so much when a child. From him she learned to know and love her Saviour. She became an inmate of his house, and assisted his family in their work of charity and mercy.—*The Sunday School Teachers' Treasury.*

Correspondence.

OUR SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Sir,—For some time past the attention of the Committee of the Union has been seriously drawn to the important question of increasing the efficiency and accommodation of the existing schools, with the view of bringing a larger number of children under instruction. With the object of eliciting from those engaged in the practical working of the Ragged Schools in the metropolis their opinions on this question, Conferences have been convened and held, and no doubt much valuable information has been acquired by these means. But, as it is possible that the following suggestions may not have been prominently brought under the notice of the Committee and others interested in the solution of this question, I have thought it well to make them the subject of this communication.

Much has been said as to the pecuniary necessities of our schools having to do with the question; but, from my experience, I believe that it resolves itself mainly into one of teachers. Once get together a staff of earnest and pious men and women, and I have confidence that, one way or another, the money will be forthcoming. The increase of the body of Ragged School teachers is a much greater difficulty to grapple with than the increase of income. Ragged School teachers in the aggregate, there is no doubt, are already overworked, and therefore, at the first blush, it appears rather paradoxical to talk of discussing the question of increased accommodation for children, unless some plans are also devised for recruiting the ranks of the teachers extraneously. The adoption of any organized plans with this object is, unfortunately, beset with many difficulties; but whatever is done in this direction should, I think, be of an organized character, as there is no disputing the fact that past attempts have not met with that measure of success which ardent friends of the cause have desired; and, to a great extent, this has been owing to the want of combination.

It is, however, in the meantime, a matter worthy of consideration, whether the existing staffs of teachers could not be more economically worked than at present.

A great lavishness is displayed in the adaptation of the teaching power to the school machinery in many of our schools. The plan of opening the schools three times on the Sabbath is still continued in many, I think. That there is really any reason now for opening these schools on Sunday mornings I have been unable to discover; for that the attendances on this part of the

day compensate for the efforts put forth, no one, I imagine, will maintain. And yet the custom is persevered in, to the manifest injury of the teachers, or one of the other schools held during the remainder of the day.

I would therefore, in the *first place*, suggest that our Ragged Schools should *only* be opened for teaching on Sabbath afternoons and evenings. There may be some schools where, from local causes, it may be advisable to assemble the scholars in the morning; but this need not necessitate the attendance of more than one or two teachers, as a special morning service could be held for such children.

The adoption of this plan would result in an improved attendance of teachers, especially in the evening, and, as consequences, more efficiency and increased accommodation.

I speak from experience when I say, that in the poor neighbourhoods in which our schools are situated, it is almost an impossibility to obtain an average attendance of scholars at the morning school.

The *second* suggestion that I would make is, that initiatory classes should be established in each school, so as to form a connecting link between scholars and teachers, and to have directly for their object the training of promising scholars for the future teachers.

The advantages that would flow from the establishment and *careful* management of such classes need hardly to be pointed out, as every one acquainted with the internal working of these institutions will readily see and appreciate them. In the school with which I have been connected for many years, many of the old scholars have been on this plan educated into efficient teachers, and, from the fact that they as a rule reside very close to the school, they become the more valuable on this account. It has always appeared to me a great pity that we have allowed so many of our promising scholars to quit our schools, when, by a little forethought and arrangement, they might have been retained with advantage. I know not how it is, but the prevalent notion is, that when our scholars arrive at a certain age, we must inevitably lose them. The retention of many of them, I believe, depends greatly upon ourselves.

It is needless almost to say that the management of these initiatory classes, and of the young people admitted to them, will require much wisdom and tact, otherwise those who are in no sense qualified for becoming teachers will be appointed. It would be a most undesirable thing to see the essential qualifications of teachers overlooked in the wish to swell the numbers. With proper care, however, this is not an evil likely to arise, as our knowledge of old scholars must be far deeper than any that we can have of new accessions to our ranks from without; and therefore the remedy will be in the hands of those in authority, who will have the selection of the future teachers from these sources. And this leads me to make the remark, that it is very desirable that those in authority—the officers I refer to—should, as far as possible, be those who, by their position and intelligence, can command the confidence of their fellow-workers.

Another recommendation that I wish to make is, that the qualifications of our teachers generally should be increased, so that the power of imparting instruction may be so improved that classes twice as large could be taught with the same staff numerically.

I have two ideas on this point. The first is wanting in definition somewhat, and is merely mentioned to elicit discussion. The second is of a more practical character.

1st. I suggest for the consideration of the Committee of the Union, and of the general body of teachers, whether the formation of auxiliary unions, partaking, as far as circumstances will allow, of the character of those of the Sunday School Union, would not greatly contribute to improve the qualifications of Ragged School teachers, and also afford more *frequent* opportunities for discussing the peculiar wants of each locality. Classes for self-improvement could be organized, and, step by step, all the advantages of mutual intercourse and effort would be felt by those connected with them. As a matter of fact, something of this kind must be done, for the greater proportion of those who teach are drawn from a class that has few facilities for mental improvement.

2nd. I think if attention were directed to the systems of teaching in operation in our various schools, data might be collected which would be valuable for future guidance. In many of our schools instruction is imparted in so desultory a manner, and the lessons are so wanting in adaptation to the ages and condition of the children, that not more than half-a-dozen can be taught *efficiently* at one time. What we want in our schools, where it is not an uncommon occurrence to have fifteen or twenty in one class, is a systematic mode of teaching which can be used with success in such classes. For more than twelve months we have tried Mimpriss's system in our Sunday Schools, and we find that it has answered very well. By it we have been enabled, with a small number of teachers, to impart instruction to large numbers of children. I do not say it is all that one could desire, but as far as I have seen it is the best system extant for the class of children we have to teach.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

WM. GOODWIN.

COMPULSORY EDUCATION.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—When I wrote my last letter to you on the above subject, I did not expect but there would be objectors to the scheme proposed; but, I think that "Q in the Corner" must either have misunderstood my letter, or wished to make mountains of molehills, by raising unnecessary and groundless fears, unconnected with the subject altogether, as particularly the latter part of his letter shows.

"Q in the Corner" seems afraid that should any system of compulsory education be adopted in this country, whether legally or by social custom, that the liberty of the subject would be curtailed. But does he not comprehend what I said in my last letter, that the want of school instruction, or ignorance, is a social evil, inasmuch as it is the parent of crime? Measures are adopted to curtail and uproot other social evils of less importance. Sanitary laws are made to diminish fever, small-pox, and cholera. Crime is

punished by the strong arm of the law. Then how much easier would it be, and how much more pleasant, to adopt every possible means to prevent the necessity of the punishment of crime, and the enforcement of sanitary laws?

The plan I proposed is simple and easy. Let the great employers of juvenile labour in London and elsewhere before employing a lad or girl, insist on receiving a school certificate, signed by the schoolmaster and school secretary, showing that the lad or girl has attended school a given number of days, what progress has been made, and the general character of the scholar. That preference be made, *all other things being equal*, to the one who brought the best certificate. I *do* contend that in proportion as a scheme something like this is carried out we should have fuller schools, better attendance, and more satisfactory conduct in the schools. There would *then* be an inducement for the parents to *send* their children to school, and an incentive on the part of the boy or girl to attend as regularly, and behave as well as possible, knowing that the value of the certificate depended on these things.

In regard to your correspondent thinking that it is not the province of the minister of the Gospel to interfere in these matters; I believe it is not only *his* duty, but also the privilege of every Christian man, to induce parents who have been "either too vicious, or too careless to see to the training of their offspring," to send them to school. It is in order to avoid the children "suffering for the crime of the parent," "the innocent for the guilty," that we make these suggestions. Here is an incentive. They would say, we *must* send them to school in order that they get employment, because we find now that preference will be always given to the best behaved and best educated boys and girls. Besides, ministers and city missionaries, by whom nearly all the poor of London are visited, would be able to show how necessary it would be for parents to have their children sent to school.

I fully expect that some would suffer. There are lads, and parents too, that nothing will move, praise or blame; punishment or prospective wealth are alike to them. No rule can be applied to such. Those who are determined not to be lifted out of the mire and filth of society, no scheme can touch. If inducements held out fail to accomplish it, certainly, "leaving things as they are" won't do it.

I never advocated that the school certificate be for scholastic attainments alone, but that the certificate state the *character earned* as well as the progress made by the scholar while at school, the number of days in attendance, &c. I am astonished that your correspondent should think the schoolmaster to be so little acquainted with the character of a boy or girl taught by him. I mean to say that after coming in contact with a boy or girl every day in school for years, that no one can give such a correct opinion of the child as the schoolmaster or schoolmistress.

I am quite at a loss to understand what possible connection there can be with such a plan as I have proposed with Government inspection, or certificating the teachers. Besides, I *do* think that your correspondent is most uncharitable in hinting that certified teachers are not as anxious to bring their children to Jesus as any Ragged School teacher. We know very well that in National and British Schools religious instruction forms a very prominent part, and we should hope that their object in teaching the

Scriptures of truth is from a much higher motive than simply earning "bread and cheese."

In conclusion, my object is not in the least to interfere with the government of any schools, or to alter or change the machinery in the slightest, but simply *to increase the amount of good done in them*,—to bring more of the lower and lowest of the children who at present run the streets *into them*, by holding out *a motive for their being educated*, and asking that gentlemen of influence, ministers, city missionaries, and benevolent ladies, aid in forwarding it, or suggesting and carrying out something better. I am sure that neither I, nor any Christian man, should wish that less of the missionary character and missionary spirit should be in our Ragged Schools, but rather that it should be fostered and increased.

I am, Sir, yours, &c., T. T.

Islington, October 12th, 1864.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—Will you be kind enough to allow me to correct a slight mistake in reference to the Dove Row Church, as contained in your last number? The shed in which the services are held is in Hay Street, not on the piece of ground taken for the new chapel, &c., in John Street. Personally, and on behalf of the church, I tender you hearty thanks for the notice and appeal for aid; and will you allow me to add, through the energy displayed by our people and the kindness of friends, we have towards the £400 required, in cash and promises, about £200. Mr. Samuel Morley has very generously offered to remit the last £50 of the amount. We require £150 still, and if any readers of your valuable Magazine will kindly lend a helping hand, I shall be happy to receive and acknowledge their kindness. It is to aid the mission of the Lord Jesus. Preach the Gospel to the poor. I am, your faithful servant,

CHARLES G. ROBSON.

3, *St. Philip's Road, Dalston, October 13th*, 1864.

LOCAL CONFERENCE MEETINGS.

THE Seventh of the series of Conference Meetings for considering the subject of the Extension of Schools, was held in the Ragged School-room, Rufford's Buildings, Islington, on Wednesday evening, July 13th. Mr. WATTS presided.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the proceedings, said: We have not come here in a spirit of discontent, but to see by what means we can get in those outside; for it is our duty to see what can be done to get in the masses. According to the statistics it appears that a great deal more can be done. It is wished to be known what hinders you from doing this in the north part of London; and that you may put your shoulder to the wheel, and if anything can be done to aid you by the Central Society, we shall be happy to render you every assistance.

Mr. GENT having been called upon by the Chairman, said, that for some years it has been the practice to hold meetings for conference on all questions of importance relating to Ragged Schools; but they were generally single meetings and held in some central place most convenient to the general body of teachers; but the Committee of the Ragged Schools had deemed the question now under con-

sideration of so much importance as to hold a series of conferences, and for the respective meetings to be held in the locality of the schools to be represented. In this part of London, taking Islington as a centre, it appears that there are 19 buildings used for Ragged Schools, in which about 3,000 scholars can be accommodated. There are about 3,500 children belonging to these schools; but as they are never all present, it is clear that the accommodation is not in full use either with regard to time or numbers. The average attendance of scholars is on Sundays about 2,000; on week days, about 2,500; and on week evenings, about 700, while the accommodation is for about 3,000. The Committee are very anxious that you should carefully consider the question of extension, more especially as it relates to the Sabbath. On that day some of the schools are open only once, while others are twice, and a few thrice. Nine are open on Sunday morning, with an average attendance of 600 scholars; 15 schools are open in the afternoon, with about 1,800 children in attendance; and in the evening 9 schools are conducted, with about 700 scholars present. It does not appear difficult to increase the number of scholars, especially during the cold months, when they seem willing to come to an extent far beyond our powers of teaching: and here comes the main difficulty, the want of teaching power and controlling influence. These wants are felt in almost every school; and it is to hear from you this evening what you think can and ought to be done to supply this want, and so double the usefulness of the schools in this locality, that our conference is being held.

Mr. BEVIS (Agar Town): Our great want is teachers with warmer hearts, and if we had them I know we could do more. We are going to try to get more teachers by some means, but by what means is not yet defined. Have them we must if the work is to be done, for there are plenty of children. We have even had to turn them away, sometimes for want of room, and sometimes for want of teachers. We never have to complain of the want of scholars. We are, however, rather undecided as to what further steps to take until we learn whether the railway will take down our school building.

Rev. — ROGERS (Britannia Row): The accommodation is just double the attendance; but I have not been able to learn the cause. The Day School is well attended, while we have a service there on Sunday morning and evening which averages about one hundred. As we have two rooms I think it might be possible to have both in operation at the same time, and if we could get the teachers we might have a Sunday Night School.

Mr. BARRINGTON (Brunswick Street): Our Sunday Night School is thinly attended, and the reason is, we want more teachers. With teachers we would soon have a full supply of scholars here. There is a large number of children running about the streets, whose habits and appearance indicate the neglect of the parents.

The CHAIRMAN: The neglect of parents makes it so much more our duty to step in. You sometimes have only one teacher, I see. Cannot you get the Rev. W. Champneys to help?

Mr. GENT: In many instances dirty rooms and windows, bad ventilation, and poor appliances, tend to keep teachers away.

Mr. BARRINGTON: Our school-room is clean and healthy, and yet we have only about three teachers.

The CHAIRMAN: Is there any one here from Copenhagen Street? I see that there is accommodation for 300 children, while there is no Sunday School, nor any kind of service on the Lord's day.

Mr. CUTHBERTSON: No one; but we must visit them, and see why, with so large a building and a large Day School, there is no Sunday School.

Mr. TOSENT (Ingram Place): We have no Sunday Evening School now, having been obliged to abandon it for the want of teachers; but we hope, under a

new Superintendent, to recommence it in the autumn.

Mr. GENT: You have a large number in your Day School which seem to pass from your influence, as it were, on the Sunday?

Mr. TOSENT: There is a large number of children in the streets, and there is a large building close by pretty well filled. I think, however, a great deal more can be done by ourselves than at present, and we will soon try to do something more.

A GENTLEMAN: At "King's Cross" School there is no Sunday Evening School. A service is held, when about twenty to twenty-five adults are present. The Committee, unfortunately, live at a distance, and the difficulty is to get teachers. We have about forty children in the morning, who go to St. Jude's Church, and in the afternoon there are about eighty present in the classes.

The CHAIRMAN: I think teachers might come even if living a little way off. Look, for example, at Union Chapel, Islington, from which place of worship as many as forty teachers go to conduct a Ragged School in Bethnal Green. The School is much wanted, for I have noticed from eighty to ninety children playing about the spot on Sundays. I consider the evening a great point to be gained.

Mr. MOUNSTEPHEN: I look upon the neighbourhood as one of the best for a school.

The GENTLEMAN: We hold our usual quarterly conference to-morrow night, and I will take care to lay your suggestion for a Sunday Night School before them.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall not be satisfied until we get every child in; and I hope our friends will not look at it as a matter of their own comfort, but as one of duty to Christ.

Rev. J. BARDSLEY (Payne Street): I may say we are going, if possible, to build another school; and we hope to get help from the Union. We want accommodation very much indeed, for the present building is quite unsafe.

The CHAIRMAN: It is a neighbourhood for a Sunday evening effort.

Mr. CURTIS: You have about 170 on the Sunday afternoon, and have 14 teachers, why not open a Sunday Night School?

Mr. BARDSLEY: We want more teachers; but it is of no use to get them without having room.

Mr. CUTHBERTSON: The number of children outside Payne Street is really alarming, and we trust attention will be given to this suggestion for a Sunday Evening School as soon as possible.

Mr. TIVENDALE (Rufford's Buildings) said: We have a Sunday Evening Service, attended chiefly by adults, and a few children. The Sunday Morning School is small. The parents are out late on Saturday: in fact, it is morning before they go to bed. Many of the children in the Day School are Roman Catholics, whose parents do not mind their coming to the Day School; but will not let them come on the Sunday.

The CHAIRMAN: I think with the amount of ministerial influence in Islington, it is possible to have a Sunday Night School, and to have another place for the Ragged Church. It is a pity to have it here, while there are hundreds of children, apart from the Ragged Church, who go nowhere, and who perhaps could be gathered in here

Mr. TIVENDALE: I question much if we should get a larger number in the evening. Our difficulty also is that of teachers.

The CHAIRMAN: I think you will easily get aid in Islington.

Mr. GENT: You have another room at the back. Why not carry on both at once? Not do away with your Ragged Church, or remove it, for it might be inconvenient to some, and they might be lost, and I am averse to the smallest amount of good being lost; but hold your School in one room and Church in the other: for the two rooms are quite distinct.

Mr. WILSON: As one of the Committee, I will undertake to bring the matter before them. It is an excellent suggestion to open a Sunday Night School in addition to present operations; one, in fact, which did not strike us before.

Mr. EARDLEY (Sermon Lane): Our Evening Sunday School is going on well. We tried an Evening Service, but it did not answer. Instead of this, we now get in the elder boys and girls, children mostly of cattle-drivers. We have about 90, but the rooms will hold about 200.

The CHAIRMAN: There are many boys and girls about, I think, who might be got in. What difficulties have you in the way of increasing the attendance?

Mr. EARDLEY: The occupation all the week, and Sunday being the only day these boys get rest and recreation.

Mr. MOUNSTEPHEN: There are no less than 316 in daily attendance, and still only so small a number as 90 in the Sunday evening.

Mr. EARDLEY: A very large proportion attend on Sunday morning or afternoon, while the Evening School is for quite a different class. Our circle of effort is small, and there are, I am happy to say, so many schools round us.

Mr. HYTCHE: I see that there is only one open in Islington on Sunday evening out of eight, and that is yours.

A GENTLEMAN from Hamilton Place: We have only opened this year, and have at present only a Sunday Night School, with an average of about seventy. In the winter, however, on two occasions we have reached eighty-four, and had even to turn many away for the want of teachers. We have now, however, a capital staff working well on the Sunday. There is a School in the afternoon, but not, however, properly speaking, a Ragged School, although many of the children might well be put down as ragged. On Friday nights the Incumbent is there. I shall be happy to see him about opening a Week Night School. With regard to teachers, I may say we had a *tea-meeting which resulted in our getting three more teachers. So I think the tea-meetings do some good that way.* The question, too, is to keep up a social feeling amongst teachers with no stiff formalities. Mr. Rickey, the Incumbent of the district in which is situated Hamilton Place School, has desired me to say that he wishes to get in all the poor classes, but many difficulties are in the way. I find a good plan is to get boys in the street around me and talk to them kindly, and then invite them to attend school. In this way we get many.

Mr. CUTHBERTSON: We have in our occupation a large number of Ragged School buildings, and yet we find the rooms on the Sabbath only half full. The Sunday Night School is what is wanted. I think we should talk to one another over this serious matter, and excite others to help us to teach these children, who will otherwise develop into pests of society. We must be banded together in this great work if it is to succeed to the needful extent.

Mr. MOUNSTEPHEN: Let us hope next year will show a different state of things in Islington.

A GENTLEMAN from Agar Town stated that he had been invited by his brother to the work; that invitation he accepted, and forthwith began to try what he could do in helping forward this good work. A good work had been already done at Agar Town, and they were in full hopes of doing yet greater things; and if the railway did come, and for a time make them school-roomless, they would not rest till they had another school-house for the poor children. They were looking round in all directions among Christian men of the working classes for the purpose of hailing them to come and help us to do the hard work. And if we are not at first successful, we try again and again till we are. That, I believe, is the way to get teachers.

The proceedings were brought to a close by prayer.

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Parkin, W., Esq.	1	1	0
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